V. PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

The history of a city, it has been said, is written in the infrastructure that serves it. The roads, sewers, water supply, electrical, and communications systems are fundamental to supporting existing uses, as well as promote new uses. As a consequence, Gloucester can help shape its future by matching the investment in its physical infrastructure to the Vision for the City. The infrastructure also includes the public services that the City provides to its citizens, businesses, and institutions. The demand for these services normally exceeds the practical resources available to fund them. As a result, the City must once again make choices among services to provide. This section of the Plan promotes a fundamental link between the quality and types of services provided and the goals and objectives that have been articulated by Gloucester citizens.

V.A. TRANSPORTATION

The ability to move within, to and from Gloucester is fundamentally linked to every aspect of daily life and commerce. As a peninsular and island community, Gloucester is served by a transportation infrastructure that has evolved in response to its geography and incremental development.

Serving automobile and truck transportation needs, streets and roads snake over the rocky hills, wind through the historic villages and downtown, and skirt a meandering coastline. It is at the "end of the line" of the regional highway system, Route 128, thirty-one miles from Boston. In a few locations, even this system is stressed by traffic in excess of design, and requires improvements for safety and convenience. Independent trucking companies serve the refrigerated seafood and industrial freight volume. Water transportation is the basis of the City's heritage.

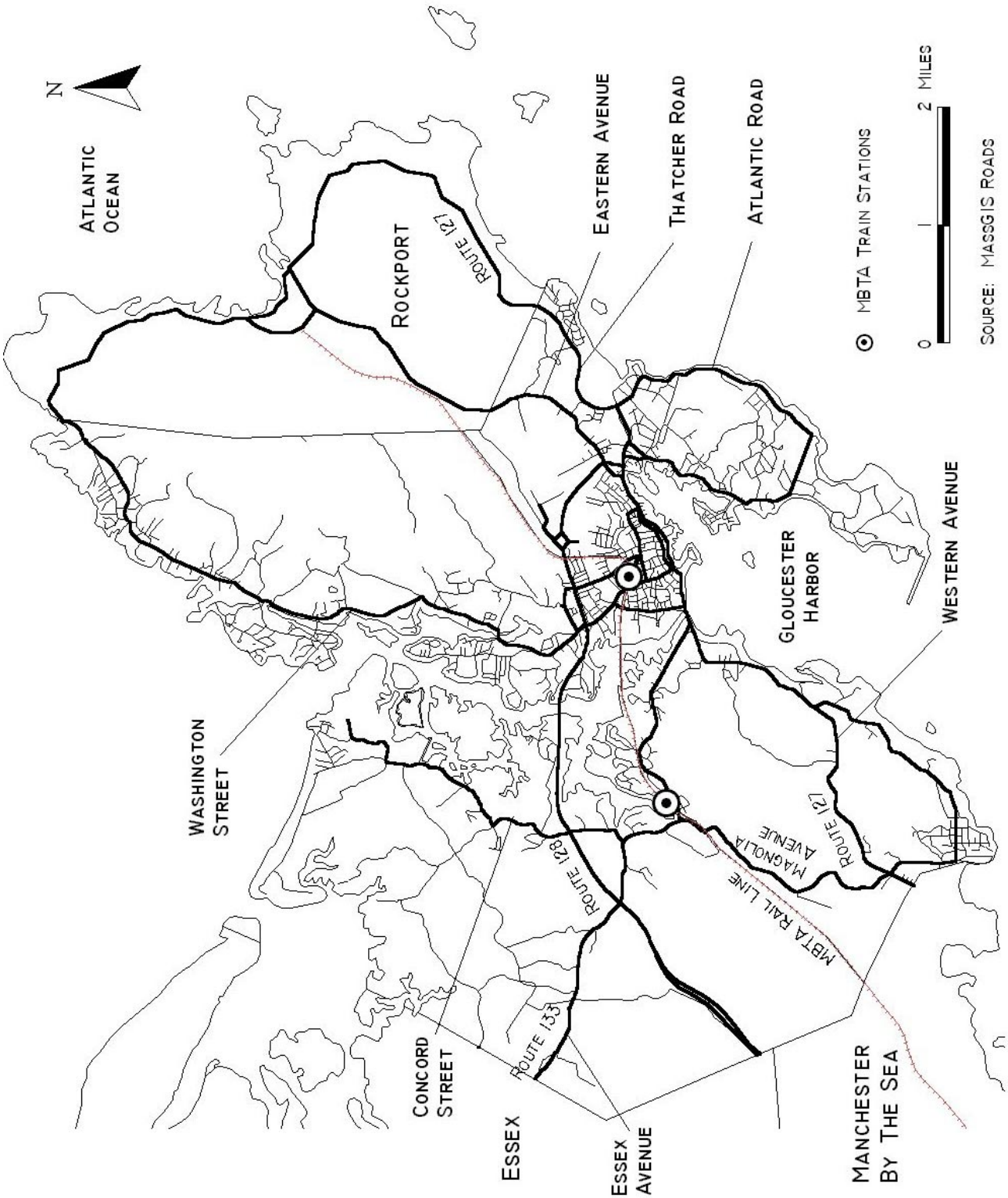
Public transit already provides alternative travel for many residents, workers and visitors. Connected to the regional rail commuter line, Gloucester imports and exports many commuters daily - a life line that might be expanded. Private and public bus systems connect Gloucester to the region, and could provide even more convenient connections in the future. There is neither a full-time local or Gloucester - Boston ferry service; a transportation study should include the potential for both services.

Gloucester is a great place to walk and bicycle - in certain locations. These "modes" of transportation can create fundamental neighborhood and community links, with connection between citizens, neighborhoods, and the services and landscape that surround them.

V.A.1. TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES AND TRENDS

The most heavily used element in the city transportation infrastructure is the roadway network. Nearly surrounded by water, Gloucester is heavily dependent on its few roadway connections to the region. Route 128 is the primary link, connecting several major arterials through the Grant and Blackburn Circles, gateways to much of the community. Two other arterials concentrate most of the remaining traffic to and from Gloucester - Essex Avenue (Route 133) and Western Avenue (Route 127). These join at the Blynman Bridge, which crosses the Annisquam River, and connect to the downtown area. With no plans for new bridges to the mainland, the City must concentrate on how the existing links can be best used or reconstructed to best match needs.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK



As might be expected of this historic water's edge community, the perimeter roads form the next major layer in the traffic circulation system. Although the names of the segments change in many locations (to the confusion of visitors), Route 127 and Route 127A are the major distributors within the network. They, in turn, connect to the major inland and waterfront street connectors, which eventually branch into a complex network of local streets and drives. This distribution system has several inherent problems. Long stretches of two-lane road serve many uses, and travel can be constrained into long lines of congestion. For example, Washington Street (Route 127) is the main access to sections of North Gloucester including Riverdale, Annisquam, Bay View and Lanesville, and neighboring Rockport. The Gloucester stretch is 5.4 miles long, and supports 23 miles of connecting roads with over 2,300 households. Every curb cut creates potential for a left-hand turn, with motorists trying to cut across traffic, leading to potential for more accidents, as traffic volumes rise. Traffic planners refer to solutions to these situations as "Access Management".

Many problems are concentrated at intersections. The City has only two timed-lights, both at Route 128 intersections, both with a high volume of automobile and truck traffic and a fair amount of pedestrian use. Proposals to install lights at other roadway intersections have been vetoed by the City. Intersections that have a substantial number of accidents and long wait times need improvements, some identified in a 1999 Traffic Circulation Study. Solutions might build on a trend in traffic engineering called "traffic calming", which seeks to slow traffic at key locations, clarify traffic movements, and create a balance between pedestrians and vehicles.

The Downtown has many traffic and parking issues, with an acute vehicle congestion problem, most noticeable during the summer. Throughout the year, Rogers Street, which supports the uses along the inner harbor and downtown, is congested throughout the workday. The street has many curb cuts and pedestrian crosswalks that contribute to stopping vehicles, impeding traffic flow; then, when the coast is clear, the width allows cars to speed, endangering pedestrians who dare to cross. Parking space is limited in the Downtown, although there are 911 public parking spaces in the central area. Nearly 600 of these spaces are metered; of those, about 425 are designated short-term, to encourage turnover that supports nearby businesses. Over 300 spaces have no meters, thus, are occupied long-term, a problem when short-term spaces are scarce. Parked trucks take up a great deal of parking space and add to congestion. The Traffic Commission and Joint Parking Commission should continue to seek workable solutions to these issues.

Walking can be a preferred alternative to driving, and the sidewalk system in the downtown and neighborhoods can support walking. Hazardous walking conditions along high traffic roads and state highways could be relieved by providing sidewalks on at least one side of the street. However, conditions vary considerably, with no sidewalks or in poor condition in some areas. The lack of signalized intersections contributes to accidents. The number of marked crosswalks should be increased. There were 17 vehicle accidents involving a pedestrian or bicycle in the downtown during a recent three-year period; some of those might have been avoided with better planning and marking. A system of walking paths that connect

neighborhoods, villages and amenities should be fully explored for greater potential.

People use bicycles as a form of transportation through all parts of Gloucester. As an on-road form of recreation, the city has miles of roads that provide interesting routes and views for cyclists. Most of the streets, however, are too narrow for designated bicycle lanes. As an off-road form of recreation, bicycle use has increased substantially over the past ten years, especially in Dogtown Commons, where cycling should be directed and controlled to prevent damage in the area. The planning and development of a bikeway system, done in cooperation with the Open Space and Recreation Committee to ensure resource protection, could provide a viable alternative to automobile transportation, support conservation and protection of natural resources, and increase the quality of life in the city.

Transit is available by train and bus, but currently not by ferry. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) has improved the North Shore line rail infrastructure to and from Boston and communities to the south, serving as an active link for commuters to and from the city. Two stations, Gloucester and West Gloucester, have insufficient parking spaces for the commuting public. The Gloucester station and its surroundings need general improvements for safety, convenience and appearance. Bus connections to the region are available through private carriers and the Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA), which also provides internal connections and supports a Dial-a-Ride service for the handicapped and elderly. As a means of convenient connection for many trips, however, the bus system provides thin and infrequent coverage and might be improved.

V.A.2. GOAL

Promote improved circulation within Gloucester and connections to the region by managing access, improving traffic flow, expanding alternative modes of travel and promoting pedestrian safety in the downtown and in neighborhoods.

V.A.3. OBJECTIVES

- Coordinate planning, public comment, and funding for transportation system improvements.
- Encourage improvements and expansion of local and regional public transit service through advocacy and action.
- Encourage use of alternative transportation modes including rail, bus, water transportation, walking, and bicycling.

- Support better connections for travelers to move conveniently from one mode of transportation to another, including buses, trains, park & ride, water shuttles and ferries, trolleys, satellite parking facilities, sidewalks and bike paths.

- Promote pedestrian connections within neighborhoods and connections to the amenities of Gloucester, including the waterfront.

- Develop parking strategies that will increase the supply of parking spaces where it is most needed to support appropriate development and achieve economic efficiencies. Promote shared parking policies and management techniques to preserve parking opportunities for residents and visitors.

- Control traffic demand through innovative land use control and permitting regulations.

- Evaluate condition of public roads and promote strategic investment for road repair and reconstruction in order to provide a safe system of streets, compatible with contemporary engineering standards.

- Assess condition of existing and need for new sidewalks throughout the city, and plan for strategic repair and reconstruction.

V.A.4. STRATEGIES

Strategy 1. Promote coordination of municipal policies and initiatives on transportation through a new Mobility Planning Committee that consists of local officials and boards and commissions with transportation-related responsibilities.

A Mobility Planning Committee, to include representatives from the Commonwealth, the Traffic Commission, Downtown Development Commission, Planning Board, Joint Chamber/ City Parking Committee, Community Development Department and Department of Public Works should be convened by the Director of the Department of Public Works. The Mobility Planning Committee will provide a forum to exchange information and views on transportation issues, evaluate transportation initiatives, explore ways to expand mobility through system improvements, inter-modal connections, and transit options. The Committee should consult the public and consider impacts of proposals, through appointed boards and commissions and neighborhood groups. Reports for each transportation improvement or initiative should indicate how it meets City policies for growth management and sound investment, its effect on the impacted neighborhood, and how those effects will be managed. A Mobility Planning Committee will promote consideration of transportation improvements in the context of the larger, cumulative implications for the community and region. This working group should report findings and recommendations to the Mayor and City Council at least semi-annually.

Strategy 2. Prepare a Transportation and Access Management Plan

The Mobility Planning Committee should prepare a Transportation and Access Management Plan (TAMP) and identify priorities for transportation-related actions. The Plan should compile a list of actions to reduce congestion within specific transportation corridors and intersections and examine potential for providing relief with a form of mass transit. Many of Gloucester's major and arterial roads are narrow, two-lane roads lined with varied uses. The TAMP should identify ways to manage the demand for road use and highway access in order to increase safety and road capacity. By establishing procedures and policies in advance, the Planning Board and Community Development Department and Department of Public Works can coordinate public improvements and private site development. Such a Plan should explain "traffic calming" techniques and identify locations to improve the pedestrian environment. "Traffic calming" includes design improvements to slow traffic, improve safety, favor pedestrians, and reduce impacts in sensitive areas. The TAMP should also direct resources for strict enforcement of traffic regulations and speed limits.

Strategy 3. Enhance transit service through policies and programs, and encourage intermodal connections.

Public transportation must be convenient if it is to be well used. The City should advocate and participate in programs that provide more and better transit services. The Mayor and City Council should urge rail, bus and local ferry service to expand schedules and access points. Services should be directed to locations for convenient exchanges between transportation choices, including provisions to encourage walking and bicycling.

Strategy 4. Support policies and programs that encourage use of modes that are alternative to the private automobile.

Efficient use of alternative transportation modes can preserve existing highway capacity. The Mobility Planning Committee and City agencies and leadership should work together to provide policy support and infrastructure for alternatives to the private automobile - such as walking, bicycling, and using bus, water or rail transit. At the same time, regional Park & Ride programs and satellite parking facilities linked by bus to events or amenities can relieve local traffic congestion. Publications distributed by City agencies should inform residents and visitors about moving around the city without an automobile.

Walking between destinations should be encouraged, and a system of walking paths and trails should be reviewed and expanded by the Open Space and Recreation Committee, with particular emphasis on access to the harbor and waterfront. Sidewalk and pedestrian improvements within neighborhoods should be examined, prioritized and installed by the Department of Public Works.

Strategy 5. Continue to provide information on available transportation options.

The Community Development Department should develop and provide information on the system of alternative modes of transportation - bike paths, walking paths, bus and water shuttles, trails - and incorporate this information into publications distributed by the Department. The existing Maritime Trail Brochure, published by the City's Tourism Office, could be used as a model for this information. Tourism information might include regional inter-modal routes, shuttle services in and around Gloucester Harbor, train and bus connections and park and ride lots.

Strategy 6. Identify, prioritize, and implement infrastructure improvement programs for all modes of transportation, including the railway stations.

The Department of Public Works should continue to develop a prioritized list of projects for improvements, including evaluation of roadway deficiencies and an inventory of sidewalk conditions, and develop a plan for new sidewalk construction and repair of existing sidewalks and make a yearly investment in these capital projects throughout the city. Priorities should be linked to public input and funding availability. Some residents are restricted from accessing public facilities because of the lack of sidewalks that could provide safe passage along city streets. For example, there are no sidewalks to several recreational areas such as Magnolia Woods and Ravenswood Park, to neighborhood schools and playgrounds, or to the West Gloucester train station.

In some cases, whole areas need improvement. For example, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) train station at Railroad Avenue is a gateway to the city and a place for residents to park when commuting outside the City. The physical condition of both this station area and the West Gloucester station should be improved, and additional parking should be provided. The Mayor and Mobility Planning Committee, acting through the Community Development Department and Grants Office, should coordinate with the MBTA for parking and station improvements in the blighted neighborhood around the Railroad Avenue station: better lighting, streetscape upgrades, and signage. Facilitating the development of additional parking at the MBTA stations could be a tool to encourage joint ventures and private sector investment in the surrounding areas.

Strategy 7. Study parking needs and take initiatives to ensure that parking supply and locations match community needs.

The Mayor's Office and the Community Development Department have joined the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce to develop parking policies that maximize the benefits of existing parking spaces in high traffic areas and explore ways to meet parking demand. This cooperative effort should continue and include the following:

- Monitor effective use of parking meters.
- Reduce amount of long-term parking in prime commercial areas.
- Create a greater turnover rate for spaces in congested areas of downtown.
- Create incentives for alternative modes of transportation.
- Establish alternative and decentralized sites to provide long-term parking supply, especially for people who work in high-traffic areas where parking is limited.
- Examine pricing polices.

Strategy 8. Evaluate public and private road development policies, to update codes and develop a quality road system that is constructed and maintained according to contemporary engineering standards.

Many of the roads in Gloucester are substandard, with a mix of private ownership and public responsibility. The Transportation and Access Management Plan should include an evaluation of road development standards and recommend changes, promote improvements and encourage flexible design and construction to improve quality and connections.

Improved integration and connectivity of the road system should protect the environment and promote efficient road management and operation. The Department of Public Works and the Community Development Department should develop indicators to monitor and assess road characteristics and conditions. Enhanced reporting capabilities in both departments would promote consistent review, follow-up and efficient scheduling of limited resources. Road design standards and construction requirements should clarify the requirements of road development and maintenance. Responsibility for maintaining private roads in passable conditions should be spelled out and should include enforcement action.

Strategy 9. Work with regional transportation planning initiatives, positioning the city for State and Federal funds for transportation system development.

Key findings and projected costs of recommended actions of the Mobility Planning Committee process should be included in the Capital Improvements Program. When appropriate, the Community Development Department, Department of Public Works and Grants Office should pursue outside funding opportunities to aid transportation development.

The needs assessment should recommend improvements to be pursued jointly with adjacent communities and with the private sector. Continued participation in the Metropolitan Area Planning Council and the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization 2000 - 2025 Transportation Plan is essential.

V.B. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The City of Gloucester provides a range of public facilities and services. Reservoirs, water supply and storm water systems, and sewers and wastewater treatment facilities contribute to the utility infrastructure. The transportation infrastructure includes the streets and roads and the repairs and services that keep them functioning. A wide range of facilities support direct services - schools and the library, parks and recreation facilities and cemeteries. To manage and coordinate all of these services, the City maintains municipal buildings and a public works yard.

New infrastructure is often proposed to help stimulate economic development, with such varied projects as seawall construction, downtown parking expansion, public-private investment for cultural attractions, and contaminated sites clean up. Through planning, the City can help ensure that infrastructure investments are consistent with both short-term needs and long-term goals. At the same time, the cumulative costs of maintenance and operation and equitable ways to reduce and distribute costs must be considered.

Gloucester is also linked to a network of services and facilities provided at a regional level or by entities beyond the City's control, including the state highway system, MBTA rail services, electrical, gas and telecommunication utilities. The Addison Gilbert Hospital, key to community health, is privately held and administered. For such services and facilities, the City must act as an advocate in the interests of its residents. The Plan also recognizes opportunities for the City to cooperate with other entities to improve cost effectiveness.

V.B.1 RESOURCES AND TRENDS

Gloucester's utility and transportation infrastructure, as characteristic of an old seaport, is concentrated in the historic and densely settled neighborhoods near the harbor and adjacent downtown. This compact infrastructure is less costly to service and maintain than dispersed, spread-out facilities, yet the aged infrastructure is difficult and costly to maintain in good working order. The Clean City Commission is eager to work with the Department of Public Works (DPW) and Downtown Development Commission to make the community gateway and civic center an attractive place that serves multiple uses.

At the same time, expanding development into outlying areas draws infrastructure in new directions, with important implications for land use and future City resources.

The DPW maintains, repairs - and, in some cases, designs and constructs - roads, sidewalks, water lines and sewers. The DPW is improving systems used to monitor problems, assess the performance of infrastructure, track maintenance and repair of equipment, and compare

potential investments. This process will provide accurate indicators of problems and monitor trends to promote sound investment in the City's infrastructure.

Water is supplied from seven reservoirs, three water towers, pipe networks, and two pump stations, with land that is set aside for watershed protection. The City operates under a State-issued water withdrawal permit, and during peak demand months, the level of consumption spikes upward, approaching permitted capacity. Water use restrictions are implemented every summer to meet conservation requirements. Implementing water supply protection and demand management, including user education, are practical, low-cost components of preserving existing capacity. Persistent water supply and distribution limitations can constrain the city's capacity to sustain population growth.

The *Water Works Facilities Master Plan*, July, 1999 by Fay, Spoffard and Thorndike, Inc., considers present and future demands, the adequacy of the distribution system and priority of needs and costs of improvements. It establishes a phased system of capital improvements which will help provide for adequate distribution facilities into the future. The study recognizes that water is a finite resource. There are increasing challenges providing the quality and quantity of water that users expect. The facilities plan does not examine in great detail whether the community can or should increase the supply of water in order to service growth beyond the next 15 years. Therefore, an essential question that must be addressed in the near future is whether it is feasible to expand water supplies, or alternatively, whether supply limitations provide a rationale to manage future growth to a greater degree.

Due to the age of the system and increased development, the water delivery system requires further upgrading of antiquated distribution lines and dams that require maintenance to prevent failure. Furthermore, federal mandates require an evaluation of the need to install drinking water pretreatment. Outlying parts of Gloucester are serviced by seasonal water lines, and the whole system has been stressed by the conversion to year-round residences. Water lines should be upgraded along with sewer excavations, whenever feasible. In some cases, development proposals might be assessed impact fees to finance public infrastructure demands.

Most of the 166 miles of roads in the city are ancient, with substandard layouts dating back to the 1800s, and earlier. Many of the 251 public roads need extensive upgrading to comply with standards for acceptable access and stormwater management. While the City manages its own network of roads and streets, more than 60 percent are privately owned.

Sewer extensions to address chronic wastewater problems in North and West Gloucester, and neighboring Rockport and Essex, are a major category of projected capital investment. There is also a long-range need to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant, which currently supports only primary treatment. Federal funding may be available to aid the installation of secondary or, possibly, tertiary-level treatment.

Like infrastructure, public facilities affect the quality of life and future opportunities. City agencies and boards and commissions are responsible for planning, design and construction.

The School system is currently conducting a facility needs assessment, using enrollment projections, existing facilities analysis, and an evaluation of alternative approaches to expanding school facilities where necessary. The Capital Improvement Advisory Board (CIAB) examines facilities demands to advise the Mayor and Community Development Department on potential capital investments, which are outlined in the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The Designer Selection Committee facilitates the public process of selecting architects and engineers for City projects, and the City Building Committee oversees construction of new City facilities.

Some City facilities are clearly in need of reorganization. The offices in downtown City Hall are crowded. The annex on Popular Street is isolated and difficult to find, and the trailers used for offices are neither efficient nor a long-term solution. Relocation and reorganization of these facilities should be linked to other considerations. For example, expansion or relocation of City services to the downtown is constrained by a current lack of parking. A comprehensive review of City facility needs should be conducted in concert with downtown revitalization and a parking strategy.

The Central Fire Station is antiquated, and its downtown location is not easily accessible to other areas of the city for emergency response. A Fire Department Facility Needs Assessment was done In the early 1990s; few of the recommendations have been implemented. The Police Station is separate from fire services, causing problems with the dispatch system and in communicating emergency response needs.

Carefully anticipating future needs can help mitigate the adverse impacts of unplanned growth. Grants and low interest loans and development impact fees can aid capital development and maintenance. With a detailed analysis of existing facilities, including the costs and benefits of alternatives, the community will be prepared to promote sound investment and quality development. Finally, with wastewater management as a model, the City can continue to work with neighboring municipalities for public service improvements that benefit both. Understanding shared needs can aid exploration of ways to jointly develop transportation improvements, recycling and refuse disposal, water supply, telecommunications infrastructure upgrades, and other services that could be provided cost-effectively under a cooperative approach.

V.B.2. GOALS

Provide quality facilities and services that meet the fundamental quality of life, and make investments in facilities to promote long-term value.

V.B.3. OBJECTIVES

- Provide for a City that is a clean and attractive place to live and visit.
- Provide for a safe, sanitary and healthy environment by ensuring adequate wastewater treatment and an ample water supply as well as police, fire and emergency protection.

- Provide for routine maintenance of existing public facilities and infrastructure to protect their long-term value.

- Develop design guidelines, to guide design, use, and settings of civic buildings, ensuring that public buildings are located to meet the public's needs and fit the historic and cultural context.

- Provide for a centralized public safety building, an updated public library, and public restrooms in the downtown and waterfront sections of the city.

- Integrate school planning with the City's infrastructure plan, updating and maintaining educational facilities, including state-of-the-art provisions for technical education.

- Develop sources of funding for capital projects and link the Capital Improvements Plan to the Comprehensive Plan recommendations.

V.B.4. STRATEGIES

Strategy 1. Provide a clean and attractive city for all who live, work, and visit our community, in part by enforcing relevant ordinances throughout the City.

One of Gloucester's main attractions is its natural and scenic beauty, and residents and visitors urge that the beauty be complemented by a clean city. The City should enforce its trash and litter policies, as well as strengthen efforts to provide for a clean and attractive city. Clean city and litter regulations and ordinances were developed based on studies and discussions by various City commissions and officials. After this effort, City agencies should either enforce or revise the regulations.

Strategy 2. Provide capacity to meet the existing and future sewer needs of the residential, commercial and industrial uses.

The wastewater treatment plant supports only primary treatment, allowed under U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provision, called an "NPDES waiver". Relatively few municipal plants have such a waiver. Gloucester should seek federal funding to move beyond the waiver and into secondary or tertiary treatment. Further, storm water in certain areas of the city is currently processed through the wastewater treatment plant. The City should plan to address these combined sewer / storm water issues as well as sewer overflow problems.

Strategy 3. Ensure that water users have an adequate supply of water throughout the year.

The City should ensure that water service to household meets the American Water Works Standards. Further, the City should ensure adequate water supply throughout the year, by seeking additional resources such as linking various natural reservoirs, now untapped and by instituting programs and polices to decrease water demand. Potential measures to examine include the following:

- Water conservation measures, such as an education and incentives program.
- Requirements for low-flow water fixtures in area buildings, and water reuse methods.

The City is currently in the initial stages of a ten-year water distribution plan, including repair of dams, replacement of gates and replacement of water pipes. This plan is essential for public safety; Gloucester should seek additional funding to expand and accelerate the plan.

Strategy 4. Increase public safety by repairing, replacing, and adding new sidewalks, streets and related facilities.

Many city sidewalks and streets are in disrepair and need to be replaced. The Department of Public Works should inventory and prioritize these facilities, and identify where new are required. All such construction should be pre-planned and coordinated (except for emergency repairs) to avoid rending a street that has just been repaired to install a water or sewer line. Various seawalls are in disrepair and a safety hazard, and need replacement. Gloucester should seek funding in addition to Seaport Bond money to rebuild the seawalls.

Strategy 5. Support the efforts of the Police and Fire Department in order to provide continued fire, police, and emergency protection.

The Police and Fire Departments have an excellent record of police and fire protection. The City should continue to support their efforts and coordinate the police and fire protection needs for areas where there are significant changes and additions in the population. Eastern sections of the city have slower fire alarm response time than other sections, explained by the present location of the fire station that services the area, Central Fire Station. The City should seek federal funding for a new, centralized public safety building.

Strategy 6. Examine and plan for meeting assorted public facility requirements.

Although the city has wonderful attractions for residents and visitors, a number of facilities require upgrading or replacement. The City should address the following needs and issues:

- Restroom facilities in downtown Gloucester are inadequate.

- Residents must visit various locations to obtain permits as the applicable departments are scattered throughout the city.

- City offices on Poplar Street are overcrowded and in poor condition.

- The Sawyer Free Library, though most of it less than thirty years old, is inadequate for today's usage. It is not air-conditioned, discouraging use in summer and threatening its valuable collection. Storage for the City's archival records is unsafe and inadequate. The Library serves many civic purposes and has one of the few public meeting rooms in the city. The Library has plans to expand to twice its current size to include space and conditions for library and city archives; however, as true of all capital programs, expansion requires City support and funds.

- Schools are inadequate and must be expanded to meet various goals including lower class size and technical infrastructure.

- The supply of parking in the core downtown is inadequate.

- All new, renovated and repaired public buildings should be designed to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

- Many public buildings are in disrepair; others are underused. An inventory of buildings should be conducted to assess needs and priorities and potential uses. Such an inventory would be useful in searching for funds and assigning space for new uses.

Strategy 7. Investigate sources and procure funding for capital improvements.

With serious City budget constraints and the high demand for improved City facilities and services, grants are critically important to meet these demands. The City should provide guidance to City departments to seek appropriate grants and low-interest loans from federal and state and foundation sources. Most grants support the salaries of the grant administrators. School and other departments with access to a large number of potential grants and sources of funds should hire experienced personnel to address those needs rather than add a secondary responsibility of an employee.

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